

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT WILLIAM SAFIRE OP-ED PAGE COLUMN,
NEW YORK TIMES, MONDAY, MAY 3, HEADED "SHUCKING THE TAMALE."

2. WASHINGTON -- "THERE WERE TWO THINGS I LEARNED IN TEXAS,"
PRESIDENT FORD SAID TO WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENTS AFTER HIS
ROUT BY RONALD REAGAN ON SATURDAY. "ONE IS -- NEVER UNDER-
ESTIMATE YOUR OPPONENT, AND TWO -- ALWAYS SHUCK THE TAMALE."

3. HE WAS REFERRING TO AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS PHOTO-
GRAPHED BITING INTO A TAMALE WITHOUT HAVING REMOVED THE
WRAPPER, AN ETHNIC GAFFE COMPARABLE TO GEORGE MCGOVERN'S
REPORTED REQUEST FOR "A KOSHER HOT DOG AND A GLASS OF MILK."

4. BUT IT WAS NOT HIS FAILURE TO SHUCK A TAMALE THAT CAUSED
GERALD FORD TO SUFFER THE MOST SEVERE POLITICAL DRUBBING
EVER GIVEN A SITTING PRESIDENT. IT WAS HIS FAILURE -- TWO
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MONTHS AGO, WHEN HE WAS RIDING HIGH AND HAD THE CHANCE -- TO

SHUCK A SECRETARY OF STATE.

5. INSTEAD, MR. FORD SENT MR. KISSINGER TO CAMPAIGN IN DALLAS LAST MONTH, WHICH GAVE A BOOST TO THE REAGAN FORCES. AND LAST WEEK, IN A HISTORIC FIRST, THE PRESIDENT PERMITTED AN AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE WHILE TRAVELING ABROAD TO LOOSE A BLAST AGAINST A POLITICAL OPPONENT AT HOME. THAT HELPED HEAP THE AYES OF TEXAS ON MR. REAGAN, TOO.

6. THE REASON WHY THE CHALLENGER IS CATCHING UP TO THE INCUMBENT IS THAT MR. REAGAN, AND NOT MR. FORD, HAS COME TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE 1976 CAMPAIGN IS ABOUT.

7. CONTRARY TO WHAT MR. REAGAN THOUGHT AT FIRST, THE CAMPAIGN IS NOT ABOUT PERSONALITY, LOCAL AUTONOMY, OR THE SATISFYING OF BALANCED BUDGETS AND CONSERVATIVE ORTHODOXY.

8. CONTRARY TO WHAT MR. FORD THOUGHT AND MAY STILL THINK, THE CAMPAIGN IS NOT ABOUT "EXPERIENCE, WHICH JIMMY CARTER IS CLEVERLY TREATING AS A LIABILITY -- OR THE ABILITY TO OCCUPY YESTERDAY'S CENTER, WHICH IS IN THE PROCESS OF BECOMING TODAY'S LEFT.

9. NOR IS THIS CAMPAIGN ABOUT EVANGELICAL OUTSIDERISM, WITH SOPHISTICATED REDNECKS AND WELL-PACKAGED YAHOOOS VYING TO BE THE ONE WHO GETS TO ROUT THE RESPONSIBLES.

10. RATHER, THE CAMPAIGN CENTERS ON: WHO CAN BEST APPEAL TO OUR PRIDE RATHER THAN OUR GUILT? WHO CAN ASSERT AMERICA'S MORAL STRENGTH AND AFFIRM OUR GREATNESS? WHO CAN GIVE US MORE POWER TO CONTROL OUR OWN LIVES AND MORE STRENGTH TO SHAPE EVENTS IN THE WORLD?

11. THAT ADDS UP TO A KIND OF PUSHY PATRIOTISM, BY JINGO, A REACTION TO VIETNAM-WATERGATE THAT THE SELF-FLAGELLATORS DID NOT EXPECT. MOST OF US DON'T LIKE GETTING PUSHED AROUND IN THE UNITED NATIONS, DON'T LIKE SILENTLY WATCHING EUROPEAN ALLIES GOING COMMUNIST, AND DON'T LIKE BEING USED AS THE SOVIET UNION'S GRANARY WHILE THEY FINANCE CUBAN EXPEDITIONS TO SPREAD COMMUNISM.

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12. THAT IS WHY THE PANAMA CANAL ISSUE TOUCHED A NERVE IN TEXAS. IF GIVING UP THE CANAL IS SUCH A GOOD IDEA, WHY HAVE WE BEEN DOING IT SO QUIETLY? WHY DOES THE PRESIDENT DENY THAT'S WHAT WE'RE DOING WHEN HIS OWN NEGOTIATOR TELLS CONGRESS THE OPPOSITE? IF WE ARE HANDING OVER OUR SWEET SUZERAINTY FOR FEAR A LOCAL COMMUNIST DICTATOR WILL SHOOT AT US, AS THE PRESIDENT SEEMS TO BE SAYING, THEN WHY IS IT

"IRRESPONSIBLE" TO EXAMINE THE ENTIRE BASIS OF THE NEGOTIATION?

13. MAYBE MR. REAGAN IS WRONG IN REFUSING TO GIVE AN INCH, BUT MAYBE THE PRESIDENT IS WRONG IN OVERLOOKING THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE LOCAL DICTATOR'S SUCCESSOR WILL SOON BE DEMANDING WE GET OUT ENTIRELY. IN TEXAS, RELINQUISHING THE PANAMA CANAL WAS THE VIVID SYMBOL OF THE "ONE-WAY STREET" TO NATIONAL DECLINE, AND THIS CANNOT BE DISMISSED AS MERE COWBOY KOOKINESS.

14. SOME FREE ADVICE, THEN, TO BOTH PARTICIPANTS IN THE ONLY GAME LEFT GOING.

15. TO PRESIDENT FORD. CUT OUT THE ANTI-ACTOR CRACKS. "NO RETAKES IN THE OVAL OFFICE, DEMEANS YOU, NOT YOUR OPPONENT. AND CHARGING THAT MR. REAGAN DOES NOT KNOW HIS DEFENSE POSTURE, WHEN JAMES SCHLESINGER PROVIDES HIS MATERIAL, WON'T WASH.

16. INSTEAD, MAKE THE CASE FOR WHAT YOU'RE DOING TO REGENERATE OUR NATIONAL WILL. YOU CAN'T SHUCK YOUR DIPLOMATIC TAMALE NOW -- THAT WOULD BE A SIGN OF WEAKNESS -- BUT YOU CAN START MAKING YOUR OWN CASE. HOW ABOUT A FOREIGN-POLICY SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF.

17. AND START TELLING THE VOTERS ABOUT THE SOLID JOB YOU'VE BEEN DOING ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT. "YOU NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD" IS NOT EXACTLY THE MESSAGE, BUT YOUR INFLATION VICTORY IS WORTH CROWING ABOUT, AND UNEMPLOYMENT IS HEADED DOWN. HIT IT HARD, YOU'RE IN BETTER SHAPE THERE THAN MR. REAGAN OR MR. CARTER.

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18. TO CANDIDATE REAGAN: DROP THE EXCESS BAGGAGE ABOUT BALANCED BUDGETS, ENERGY BILLS, AND THE STANDARD PITCH ABOUT HOW GREAT YOU WERE IN CALIFORNIA. WE KNOW ALL THAT.

19. GET TO YOUR POINT AND STICK TO IT: ONLY A "CAUSE, CAN WREST A NOMINATION FROM A PRESIDENT. THE CAUSE IS AMERICA'S ABILITY TO DEFEND, REFINE AND ULTIMATELY EXTEND HUMAN FREEDOM IN THE WORLD.

20. THE QUALITY OF THE REPUBLICAN PRIMARY CAMPAIGN WILL DETERMINE THE OUTCOME OF THE FALL CAMPAIGN. MR. CARTER, LIKE MR. NIXON IN 1968, WILL KEEP SAYING "TRUST ME" FOR AS LONG AS HE CAN GET AWAY WITH IT. THE REPUBLICAN NOMINATION

THE ONLY ONE IN CONTEST, IS ALL THAT REMAINS TO FORCE A
SEARCHING EXAMINATION OF AMERICA'S MISSION IN THE WORLD.
(END TEXT) SISCO

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